



Vol. XXX No. III
October 2014

The Palo Alto *VOTER*

The League of Women Voters of Palo Alto
www.lwvpaloalto.org

ELECTION ISSUE!!!

**Election Day is
November 4!**

Two Candidates Forums!

Palo Alto Unified School District Board

Tuesday, September 16, 7 - 9 pm

25 Churchill, PAUSD Board Room

Palo Alto City Council

Tuesday, September 30, 7 - 9:30 pm

Congregation Etz Chayim, Social Hall
4161 Alma Street, Palo Alto

*Co-sponsored by Palo Alto Council of PTAs,
Palo Alto AAUW, Avenidas, Palo Alto Chamber of
Commerce, Palo Alto Weekly, Palo Alto Online
and the Midpeninsula Community Media Center.*

The Midpeninsula Community Media Center will
tape both forums. The PAUSD forum will be
streamed live at [http://midpenmedia.org/local-tv/
watch-now/](http://midpenmedia.org/local-tv/watch-now/) and both will be rebroadcast on Cable
Channel 28.

**LWVPA Pros and Cons Presentations
Open to the Public**

Tuesday, September 30, 2 pm
Avenidas, 450 Bryant Street

Monday, October 6, 7 pm
Channing House, 850 Webster Street
Valet parking available

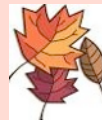
Sunday, October 12, 4 pm
Congregation Beth Am
Beit Keillah, lower campus sanctuary
26790 Arastradero Road, Los Altos Hills

Thursday, October 16, 2 pm
Stevenson House, 455 East Charleston Road

Pros and Cons, the arguments for and against the
three Palo Alto measures and six State propositions
on our ballot, are presented by a cadre of trained
LWVPA volunteers.

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**Don't miss
LWVPA's
Fall Kick-Off**



with special speaker

Hillary Gitelman

**Palo Alto's Director of Planning and
Community Environment**

Wednesday, September 17, 7 - 9 pm

Unitarian Universalist Church of Palo Alto
505 E. Charleston Road, Palo Alto

Open to the public - bring your friends!

*Candidates Forums and Pros and Cons presentations
are part of the League's nonpartisan Voter Education
Service to the community.*

The League is a broadly based, nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and involved participation in government through voter service, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Message from our President

Even though the League's work continues year-round, September and October are our busiest months in election years. In addition to **two Candidates Forums -- Palo Alto Unified School District Board on September 16 and Palo Alto City Council on September 30** -- we will offer at least four **Pros & Cons** presentations, explaining all the state and local ballot measures.



For other races on the ballot and perhaps more challenging to learn about, the Los Altos/Mountain View League is offering an informal "Meet & Greet" event. **Candidates for Superior Court Judge - Office 24, El Camino Hospital District, Santa Clara Valley Water District - District 7, Foothill DeAnza Community College District and Midpeninsula Open Space District** will be available for your questions. This opportunity will be from **1 to 3 pm on Sunday, September 28**, at the Los Altos Youth Center, 1 N. San Antonio Road, Los Altos. Contact is natalie.elefant@gmail.com.

Our League, with help from PTA volunteers, hopes to assist as many Palo Alto schools as possible in conducting a **MyVote California Student Mock Election on Tuesday, October 28**. The Mock Election gives students firsthand experience by providing them a chance to make their voices heard on the candidates and issues on this fall's ballot. The California Secretary of State's office coordinates this excellent introduction to the electoral process for our youth.

A few dates to keep in mind are:

- On **October 6** the Registrar of Voters will begin mailing vote-by-mail ballots,
- **October 20** is the last day to register to vote for the November election, and
- **October 28** is the last day to request a vote-by-mail ballot by mail.

Finally, a bit of good "eco-news." If you would like to "Go Green" for this election, you may choose to receive your Sample Ballot and Voter Information Pamphlet electronically instead of by regular mail. Note that signing up for this service does not enable you to vote online or by e-mail, neither of which is permitted under California law. This environmentally friendly option is only for electronic delivery of your Sample Ballot and Voter Information Pamphlet (SBVIP). For more information and instructions on how to get your SBVIP electronically, see the Frequently Asked Questions at <http://www.sccgov.org/sites/rov/Voting/Pages/Go-Green.aspx>.

We look forward to supporting your efforts to cast educated votes!

Ellen Forbes

SAVE THE DATE!

Friday, December 5, 11:30 am -1:30 pm for LWVPA's Annual Winter Luncheon featuring Dr. Glenn "Max" McGee, New Superintendent of the Palo Alto Unified School District At the Garden Court Hotel. More information on purchasing your ticket to follow.

LWV of Palo Alto: Officers, Directors, Off-Board Roster (650) 903-0600, www.lwvpaloalto.org

OFFICERS

Ellen Forbes
President
president@lwvpaloalto.org

Bonnie Packer
1st Vice Pres., VOTER Editor
bbpacker@comcast.net

Phyllis Cassel
2nd Vice Pres., Advocacy

Marlene Prendergast
Secretary

Doris Petersen
Treasurer

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Veronica Tincher
New Voices; Smart Voter Liaison; LAT support

Trina Lovercheck
Voter Service

Christine Logan
Membership

Mary Alice Thornton
Program Planning; League-a-Thon

Betty Gerard
Publicity

Liza Taft
Voter Registration; VOTER Distribution; Health Care

OFF-BOARD

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eAction Alert

Arnold Petersen
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Diane Rolfe
Community Outreach

TBD
Education

Jeff Rensch
Housing

Luise Maier
Hospitality

Pat McGuire
Webmaster/LAT support

Karen Sundback
Water/Natural Resources

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Megan Swezey Fogarty
Pat Saffir

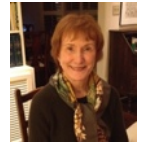


September Board Meeting Summary

At its September meeting your board took the following actions:

- Accepted the Treasurer's Report and approved the minutes of the August meeting.
- Voted to Support the City of Palo Alto Local Ballot Measure B - Transient Occupancy Tax.
- Voted to Support the City of Palo Alto Local Ballot Measure C - Utility Users Tax.
- Voted to Oppose City of Palo Alto Local Ballot Measure D - Reduce City Council Size from 9 to 7.
Editor's note: See page 4.
- Approved plans for Candidates Forums on September 16 for the Palo Alto Unified School District Board election, and on September 30 for the Palo Alto City Council election as reported by Voter Service Chair **Lovercheck**.
- Adopted a motion to spend additional funds to use three cameras from the Media Center for the City Council forum because of the large number of candidates.

- Approved questions for the candidates for the Santa Clara Valley Water District 7.
- Voted to renew membership in the Palo Alto Chamber of Commerce.



Your board also:

- Discussed general **publicity guidelines** for LWVPA events but also determined that each organizer should make the final decision. There must be continued emphasis on the separation of the League's advocacy events and voters service events so that the public understands this distinction.

Your board learned:

- That Membership Chair **Logan** has formed a committee to discuss and propose suggestions for **increasing membership**, particularly of younger members.
- About **voter registration efforts** at new citizen events, neighborhood events, the Veterans Hospital and Gunn and Paly high schools, as reported by Voter Registration Chair **Taft**.

Submitted by Marlene Prendergast, Secretary

Lunch with the League is Back!

What is the Palo Alto TMA? Changes to parking will start as soon as January 2015! What changes? And will they work for you?



Jessica Sullivan, City of Palo Alto Parking Manager
Wednesday, October 22, 11:45 am - 1 pm

A new venue! Bay Café Restaurant

1875 Embarcadero Road, Palo Alto (near the golf course)

Buffet lunch is \$17 per person. Please RSVP to lwvpaoffice@gmail.com or 903-0600 by October 17.

Voter Registration Opportunities

New Citizens We are proud to be able to assist the Santa Clara County Registrar of Voters (ROV) in registering new citizens to vote after the **New Citizen (Naturalization) Ceremonies** in **Campbell**, at the **Heritage Theater, 1 West Campbell Avenue** on **Thursday, September 18; Two sessions per day: 10:30 - 11:30 am and 1:30 - 2:30 pm**. You can help at either one or both sessions and you may attend the New Citizen Ceremonies which start at 9:30 am and 12:30 pm. A third session may be added. There is time between sessions to get lunch within walking distance in downtown Campbell. **It's a very rewarding experience to help welcome new citizens!**



Neighbors We will be registering voters at the **Midtown Neighborhood Association Ice Cream Social** at Hoover Park on Cowper, Palo Alto, on **Sunday, September 14**, from 1 to 4 pm. Please stop by and say hello!

Veterans on September 23, National Voter Registration Day! We will be registering voters at the Palo Alto Veterans Hospital on **Tuesday, September 23**, from 10:30 am until 1:30 pm. If you can just be there for an hour and a half, that would be fine.

High School Students We will be registering high school students at

- **Gunn High School: Tuesday, October 7, and Wednesday, October 8, from 12:50-1:30 pm** and
- **Palo Alto High School: Tuesday, October 14, from 11:45 am to 12:10 pm**

Email me at edtphoto@comcast.net or call me NOW if you want to help with any of these voter registration events. My phone number is in your membership directory.

Liza Taft, Voter Registration Chair

The League of Women Voters of Palo Alto Recommends:

Yes on Measure B: Transient Occupancy Tax.

To provide funding that cannot be taken away by the State, for general fund infrastructure and City services such as earthquake safe fire stations; pedestrian and bike improvements including safe routes to school, streets, sidewalks, paths, and bridges; and maintaining parks and recreation facilities, shall the City increase the hotel/motel tax by two percent and update language to confirm equal treatment of traditional and online bookings?

Yes on Measure C: Utility Users Tax.

To ensure continued funding for basic and essential services such as police, fire and street maintenance and repair; shall the City of Palo Alto maintain the telecommunications portion of the Utility Users Tax while reducing the rate from 5% to 4.75%; modernize its provisions to ensure equal treatment of taxpayers regardless of telecommunications technology used; and eliminate a discounted tax rate paid by a small number of commercial large users of gas, electric and water services?

The LWVPA board voted to support these measures based on our LWVPA finance position which reads in part: *The LWVPA supports maintenance of city services and programs at the highest level possible under budget constraints and we support raising reliable revenues as efficiently as necessary to meet these needs.*

These tax measures developed as a result of the work of the Infrastructure Blue Ribbon Commission, established in the fall 2010, which identified the infrastructure needs for all municipal functions except for the City-owned utilities. The Commission and the City Council have reviewed the recommendations, the priorities and the possible funding sources for the last two and one-half years. Both of these ballot measures propose amendments to existing tax ordinances, both modernize the language to include new technologies and both are general fund taxes that can be approved with a majority of the votes cast.

No on Measure D: Change Council Size to 7.

Shall the Palo Alto City Charter be amended to change the number of Council Member seats from nine to seven, commencing on January 1, 2019?

Based on our current position based on 1994 and 2003 studies, the LWVPA board voted to oppose Measure D. The 2003 consensus statement concluded that a nine-member Council allows for more attention to the many obligations of the Council members, including the management of the City's own utilities. A nine-member Council also allows for more diversity, and the length of the meetings depends mostly on the dynamics of how the Council operates rather than on its size.

Ballot Measure Recommendations



The League Of Women Voters of California Recommends:

Yes on Proposition 2: Rainy Day Fund--State Budget Reserves.

The LWVC supports Prop 2 because it takes an important step toward fiscal discipline in our state government. It requires the state to make contributions to its rainy day reserve fund and pay down debts and liabilities when times are good, with increased contributions in years when revenues spike upwards. In bad times, those reserves can be used to reduce cuts in spending on schools, health care, public safety, and other vital services. Prop 2 requires joint action of the Governor and the Legislature to reduce the amount put in or to take money out of the rainy day fund.

Yes on Proposition 47: Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Act.

The LWVC supports Prop 47 because it will ensure that prison spending is focused on violent and serious offenses and will maximize alternatives for non-serious, nonviolent crime. The savings generated will be invested in prevention and support programs in K-12 schools, victim services, and mental health and drug treatment.

Prop 47 will change low-level nonviolent crimes such as simple drug possession and petty theft from felonies to misdemeanors; sentences for people convicted of dangerous crimes like rape, murder, and child molestation will not be changed. The League believes alternatives to imprisonment should be explored and utilized, taking into consideration the circumstances and nature of the crime.

Neutral on Proposition 1: Water Bond

Because League positions do not cover the issues in **Proposition 45** (Healthcare Insurance. Rate Changes), **Proposition 46** (Drug and Alcohol Testing of Doctors, Medical Negligence Lawsuits) and **Proposition 48** (Indian Gaming Compacts), the LWVC is taking no stand on these measures. lwvc.org/ballot-recommendations



Advocacy Report - Phyllis Cassel

The 2014 **State legislative session** ended quietly and on time, on August 29. The **DISCLOSE Act, SB 52**, passed all its committees and processing steps only to be pulled from the agenda on the last day of the legislative session. It was pulled because of the last minute all out pressure from Labor. Assembly Speaker Atkins and Senators Leno and Hill promise to push hard for this bill next year. There were many amendments to the Political Reform Act of 1974; some 13 League-supported amendments passed, but none of these have the major impact of SB 52 which would make clear who is financing political ads. The Governor has until September 30 to sign the 13 bills that did pass. There were numerous other bills that LWVC supported that also were sent on to the Governor including one that requires health coverage to include all forms of birth control.

Remembering Mary Elizabeth Van Patten

Mary Elizabeth Van Patten died on August 2 at the age of 94. She was a Life member of LWVPA and remained a LWVPA member even after she moved to San Jose. She was a Kindergarten teacher in PAUSD (retired in 1982) and served on our Board of Directors and our Education Committee. Here are some memories from LWVPA members:

Mary Elizabeth was always a delight to work with.

I remember her fondly.

Mary Elizabeth became hard of hearing (circa 2000) and had trouble hearing at meetings and so taught us something about how to hold a meeting that was open to everyone.

Mary Elizabeth was honored with the Peg Capron Award for Community Service at her church (UUCPA).

Mary Elizabeth was one of the people who advocated for the Palo Alto preschool program a number of years ago.

She was instrumental in persuading Palo Alto to invest in affordable housing.

Mary Elizabeth was such a wonderful example of women who continue to serve their community.

She chaired the LWVPA national study of "Children at Risk" and also served on the Juvenile Justice study committee. She remained as our local "consultant" on issues of children at risk during the time she was on the Board and sometime after.

She was a great advocate for children and resource for education issues.

Mary Elizabeth was a long time participant in our Great Decisions meeting -- always prepared and added much to the discussions. A real loss when she moved to San Jose.

She had an infectious smile and could instantly go from that to seriousness when the discussion changed.

Juvenile Justice opportunity

The **problems** in California's Juvenile Justice system have been widely reported. How would you like to **help the League suggest and advocate for some solutions?** Our Santa Clara County Juvenile Justice Committee is looking for interested members. Please contact **Melody Grandell** at melodyeco@gmail.com if you would like to work on this important topic.



Women's Equality Day and New Voices for Youth Celebrated at our Summer Social on August 26

President Ellen Forbes introduced the Summer Social by reminding us that August 26 was **Women's Equality Day**. She said:

Ninety-four years ago today -- after decades of tireless advocacy -- the 19th amendment, granting women the right to vote, was signed into law by President Woodrow Wilson. It took a full 41 years of determined work -- at both state and national levels -- to achieve this success.

***Susan B. Anthony** and **Elizabeth Cady Stanton** had first introduced the amendment in 1878. This historic date honors the culmination of women's suffrage -- but as we know, the fight for universal suffrage continues today.*

Then Bonnie Packer presented a **Resolution** honoring **Mary Alice Thornton's** tireless dedication to LWVPA in all of her varied roles -- too many to list here!

The highlight of the evening was a fantastic program from **New Voices for Youth**, our League youth outreach project, and **YLAC (Youth Leaders About Change)**, a project of YCS (Youth Community Services). **Ana Angel Avendano**, New Voices Project Director, and **Nimsi Garci**, New Voices Intern, presented videos produced by the students in their after-



NV4Y and YLAC teens at the Summer Social

school program this past spring. **Branessa Kunitz**, facilitator for YLAC, also participated in the Q&A. The **"When Fosters Speak"** video showed the misconceptions that many teens have about foster kids and featured a young woman who is in the foster system. She talked about her experiences as a foster -- pro and con. Check out other videos produced by New Voices students -- www.newvoicesforyouth.org/videos.

New Voices and YLAC have combined to make one project at Menlo-Atherton High School this year, **Project V.O.I.C.E. (Value Our Identity on Campus for Equity)**, funded by the Mid-Peninsula YWCA Endowment Fund.

Thanks to the **Garden Court Hotel** for a lovely venue and wonderful service, to **Luise Maier** for obtaining the delicious cake, to **Chris Logan** for greeting our guests and to **Mary Alice Thornton** for making all the arrangements for this wonderful annual event.

Submitted by Veronica Tincher and Bonnie Packer

League of Women Voters of Palo Alto Annual Report to Members Fiscal Year 2014

Assets	6/30/14	6/30/13		
Checking	\$20,048	\$19,932		
Savings	25,203	23,381		
Samuel Taylor Fund	252	1,817		
Postage Accounts	86	189		
Total	\$45,589	\$45,319		
Education Fund	\$251	\$325		
Total Assets	\$45,841	\$45,644		
Variance:				
	Actual	Budget	Fav/ (Unfav)	
Income				
Dues	\$15,313	\$15,225	\$88	
Contributions from Members	5,463	5,300	163	
Contributions from Others	5,771	3,000	2,771	
Meeting Fees	2,200	2,500	(300)	
Reimbursements	-	-	-	
Other	114	-	114	
From Education Fund	11,940	9,000	2,940	
Total Income	\$40,801	\$35,025	\$5,776	
Expense				
Administration	\$16,256	\$14,246	\$(2,010)	
PMP	12,171	12,122	(49)	
Service to Members	6,118	6,140	22	
Service to Community	3,811	1,825	(1,986)	
Action	1,000	500	(500)	
Program & Study	-	100	100	
Fund Raising	1,371	1,200	(171)	
Other	71	-	(71)	
Total Expense	\$40,797	\$36,133	\$(4,664)	
Net Gain/(Loss)	\$3	\$(1,108)	1,112	
Education Fund Income				
Contributions from Members	\$6,680	\$4,500	\$2,180	
Contributions from Non-Members & Other Sources	5,186	4,500	686	
Total Income	\$11,866	\$9,000	\$2,866	

Thanks to Karen Douglas who audited our accounts and found that they are correct and in good order.

Communications Workshop - a Huge Success!

On **Saturday, August 23**, LWVPA hosted a communications workshop attended by representatives from **ten Bay Area Leagues**. The workshop featured a panel of stellar resource people: **Helen Hutchison, LWVC President**, who addressed best practices in communicating with our members and the public; **Alec**



MacDonald, editor of the **Bay Area Monitor** and the **Oakland League VOTER**, who described how he puts together these publications; and **Carol Watts, LWVC Easy Web**, who shared the best ways to utilize and manage our local League websites. The 30-plus participants had a lively discussion sharing their questions and experiences on all aspects of League communications including issues about print and digital methods, social media, publicity and more. We all agreed this was a valuable three hours and we hope to do more workshops.

We owe much of the success of this workshop to **Mary Alice Thornton** who assembled the panel of experts and invited so many Leagues to participate.

Submitted by Bonnie Packer

The LWV Southwest Santa Clara Valley invites you to its first

LWV Annual Community Luncheon

Carl Guardino,

President and CEO, **Silicon Valley Leadership Group**, will speak on

“The Effect of Economic and Population Growth on our Valley”

Tuesday, September 23, 11:00 am - 2:00 pm

California Café, Old Town
50 University Ave., Los Gatos

Cost: \$20.

**Reservations are required and seating is limited, so
please RSVP by Tuesday, September 16.**

To get an e-ticket please send your check made out to LWV SWSCV, your email address and your menu selection (grilled chicken sandwich or mixed greens salad) to: LWV SWSCV, P.O.Box 2865, Saratoga, CA 95070

For more information, please call Hana Itani, 408-598-1842 (President of LWV-SWSCV)

*To link to the **BLUE HIGHLIGHTED** websites in the VOTER, you need to read this in a PDF format on a computer. Go to our website at www.lwvpaloalto.org/VOTER.html or email bbpacker@comcast.net to start receiving the VOTER as a PDF via email.*

Housing and Transportation Committee

Trina Lovercheck will now be our official LWVPA representative for the ongoing **Housing Element Community Panel**. We are also looking for ways to participate more fully in discussions of the ongoing **Comprehensive Plan** update. In addition, the issue of



transportation is timely right now, with plans for a **transportation management agency** and various city initiatives to improve **downtown parking**. LWVPA does not currently have a person dedicated to following this issue, attending the relevant meetings, etc. This might be a good role for an interested member (or several members in a team?) to try on. The next Housing and Transportation Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for **Monday, September 15, 4:30 pm at the LWVPA office**. Contact Jeff Rensch, jrench@gmail.com for more information.

Submitted by Jeff Rensch, Committee Chair

Thanks to all the board and off-board members who reviewed this *VOTER* and a special thanks to **Ellen Forbes, Betty Gerard** and **Trina Lovercheck** for their extra careful and invaluable proofreading.

Thank You!

Submitted by Bonnie Packer, VOTER editor



Thanks to all of you who have sent in your dues!

But there are still many of you who not. Please send in your dues renewal NOW so we can be sure any changes will go in the membership directory. We are printing the directory soon, so don't procrastinate! And don't forget to indicate that you want to receive the *VOTER* via email!

Chris Logan, Membership Chair

New Citizen Ceremony

THANK YOU!

On **August 21**, several LWVPA members helped the Santa Clara County Registrar of Voters register brand-new citizens. It was an inspiring and memorable experience. I wish to thank the following for all their help: **Veronica Tincher, Bonnie Schwid, Mary Jo Levy, Joyce Tavrow, Phyllis Cassel, Bonnie Packer** and **Sara Eppstein** (Phyllis's granddaughter). Your help was very much appreciated. See you all next year.

Thank you, Liza Taft

The LWVPA Book Club

will meet

Friday, October 24, 10 am

to discuss

"A Clearing in the Distance: Frederick Law Olmsted and America in the 19th Century"

by Witold Rybczynski

The story of a man of extraordinary diverse talents.

The meeting is at the home of Rosalie Lefkowitz

Visitors welcome.



LWVPA's Voters Guide is coming to your mailbox by the end of the month. Read the Pros and Cons of the ballot measures!



It's easy to join the LWVPA —Do it now! You will be glad you did.

Joining at the local level makes you a member at all levels:

National, State, Bay Area and Palo Alto.

Men are encouraged to join. Dues grants are available.

For more information, call the League office (650) 903-0600.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Phone (day) _____ (evening) _____ email _____

Annual membership: \$70. Additional membership, same address: \$35. Student membership: \$35.

Mail check with this form to LWVPA, 3921 E. Bayshore Road, Suite 209, Palo Alto, CA 94303

Membership dues to the LWVPA are not tax deductible.

League of Women Voters of Palo Alto
3921 E. Bayshore Road, Suite 209
Palo Alto, CA 94303
(650) 903-0600

Address Services Requested

Dated Material
Please Expedite

How to contact your elected officials:

CALENDAR

UNITED STATES

President Barack Obama (202) 456-1414
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/CONTACT/>

Senator Dianne Feinstein (415) 393-0707
<http://feinstein.senate.gov> - click "email me"

Senator Barbara Boxer (415) 403-0100
<http://www.boxer.senate.gov/>

Rep. Anna Eshoo (650) 323-2984
<http://eshoo.house.gov/>

CALIFORNIA

Governor Jerry Brown (916) 445-2841
<http://gov.ca.gov/home.php>

Senator Jerry Hill (650) 212-3313
<http://sd13.senate.ca.gov/contact-us>

Assemblyman Rich Gordon (650) 691-2121
<http://asmdc.org/members/a24/>

SANTA CLARA COUNTY

Supervisor Joe Simitian (650) 965-8737
joe.simitian@bos.sccgov.org

LWVC GUIDE TO GOVERNMENT

Locate your elected officials with your street address
<http://www.guidetogovernment.org/>

Tues, Sep 16, 7-9 pm
PAUSD Candidates Forum
25 Churchill

Wed, Sep 17, 7-9 pm
Fall Kick-Off
Unitarian Universalist Church

Thu, Sep 18
Naturalization Ceremony
Campbell

Tues, Sep 23, 10:30 am-1:30 pm
National Voter Registration Day
Palo Alto Veterans Hospital

Tues, Sep 23, 10:30 am-1:30 pm
LWV SWSCV Luncheon
Los Gatos

Sun, Sep 28, 1-3 pm
Meet the Candidates
Los Altos

Tue, Sep 30, 2 pm
Pros and Cons, Avenidas

Tue, Sep 30, 7-9:30 pm
City Council Candidates Forum
4161 Alma (Etz Chayim)

Mon, Oct 6, 7 pm
Pros and Cons, Channing House

Tues, Oct 7, 7-9:30 pm
Board Meeting
Gerard

Fri, Oct 10, 9 am
VOTER deadline

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Tues, Oct 28,
Mock Election
Palo Alto Schools